Rio Tinto Eagle Mine 4547 County Road 601 Champion, MI 49814, US T 906-486-1257 F 906-486-1053

Mr. Randy Conroy MDEQ Upper Peninsula District Office Water Resources Division 420 5th Street Gwinn, MI 49841-3004

RECEIVED

DEC 17 2012

MDEQ UP DISTRICT OFFICE

December 14, 2012

Re:

Humboldt Mill Facility: 30-Day Incident Report for Bentonite Release to Wetland "EE" Waterbody General Inspection – National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

(NPDES) Permit No. MI0058649

Designated Name: Kennecott-Humboldt Mill

Dear Mr. Conroy:

Rio Tinto Eagle Mine LLC (Rio Tinto) received your correspondence from November 15, 2012, concerning the release of bentonite material to nearby wetlands during construction activities at the Humboldt Mill. As you referenced in your letter, Rio Tinto is currently constructing a containment wall along the north end of the Humboldt Pit per Part 632 Mine Permit requirements. During these construction activities, bentonite slurry flowed through the subsurface to a wetland on the north side of the pit. Attached is a letter submitted to Mr. Joe Maki on November 1, 2012, detailing the incident and the immediate actions taken to minimize the impact to Wetland EE.

Following the immediate response detailed in the attached letter, a Minor Project Joint Permit Application (JPA) was filed with MDEQ for the installation of a silt fence and turbidity curtain in Wetland EE. These controls have been installed and remain in place to ensure that the bentonite is contained within that area and will not travel to the Escanaba River.

In addition to installing the sedimentation controls, the contractors discontinued work at that location and moved activities to the far west end of wall construction. This allowed time for the engineering and construction teams to develop a new approach for construction in the area susceptible to bentonite seepage. Several different construction methods were evaluated, including gradient reduction, sheet piling, soil compaction, additional grouting and slurry minimization.

After surveying the existing ground conditions (i.e. cobbles), it was determined that the optimal approach for construction would be to minimize and control the slurry introduction into the trench. The excavator will work in small increments moving forward while adding a small amount of bentonite slurry behind a soil dam to test the integrity of the subsurface. If the slurry level holds elevation, the dam will be removed and the excavator will repeat the process. This allows increased control over slurry introduction, quantity, and thickening if necessary. The wetland sedimentation controls that are currently installed per the Minor Projects JPA will be removed following completion of construction and any wetland restoration efforts that are required.

Mr. Randy Conroy MDEQ Upper Peninsula District Office December 14, 2012 Page Two

Should you have any questions concerning this correspondence, please contact me at 906-486-1257, ext. 229.

Yours sincerely,

Kristen Mariuzza, P.E.

Environmental and Permitting Manager

Cc: Ms. Ginny Pennala, WRD, UP District

Mr. Mike Smolinski, WRD, UP District

Mr. Joe Maki, Office of Oil, Gas and Minerals

Geri Grant, SWP, CEMP

Rio Tinto Eagle Mine 4547 County Road 601 Champion, MI 49814, US T 906-486-1257 F 906-486-1053

November 1, 2012

VIA E-MAIL

Mr. Joe Maki
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
Upper Peninsula District Office
420 – 5th Street
Gwinn, Michigan 49841

RE: HUMBOLDT MILL FACILITY: 10 DAY INCIDENT REPORT FOR BENTONITE RELEASE TO WETLAND "EE"

Dear Mr. Maki:

Pursuant to General Condition F.8 of Nonferrous Metallic Mineral Mining Permit Number MP 01 2010, as issued to Kennecott Eagle Minerals Company (KEMC) on February 9, 2010, this letter follows up our prompt verbal notice and provides a written report on an incident that recently occurred at the Humboldt Mill facility.

INCIDENT DESCRIPTION

On October 22, 2012, personnel from Remedial Construction Services, L.P. (Recon), under contract to Fluor Corporation (Fluor), KEMC's engineering, procurement and construction management firm for redevelopment of the Humboldt Mill facility, were excavating to construct a soil bentonite slurry wall near the northern terminus of the Humboldt Tailings Disposal Facility (HTDF). Construction of this wall is required by the conditions of KEMC's mine permit to limit subsurface flow of groundwater from the HTDF to Wetland EE. The slurry wall is being constructed in accordance with the HTDF Cut Off Wall Design and Basis of Design documents submitted and approved by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). As is typical of soil bentonite slurry wall construction, the excavation was being completed under a dilute aqueous slurry of bentonite (i.e., the trench excavation was full of approximately 5% bentonite slurry).

At approximately 10:00 a.m., as Recon personnel were excavating the slurry wall trench at station 18+80 (see enclosed plan Sheet 5, Attachment I), an approximately 10 foot long pocket of shotrock was encountered at a depth from approximately 6 feet below ground surface (bgs) to 10 feet bgs and approximately 10 feet long. Recon personnel recognized the material to be shotrock because a significant volume of shotrock had previously been encountered by Recon during preparation of the slurry wall construction workpad. Shotrock is generally described as 10-inch minus, angular to sub-angular material which readily transports fluid. Shotrock had not been encountered within the slurry wall trench up to this point. Shortly after encountering this pocket of shotrock, the liquid slurry elevation in the trench dropped by approximately three feet over the course of about thirty minutes, strongly suggesting the release of liquid bentonite slurry from the trench to the surrounding geologic formation. Some of the released bentonite slurry was retained in the geologic formation and some vented to the adjacent wetland.

INITIAL RESPONSE ACTIONS

Suspecting that the slurry may have migrated into voids in the subsurface, site personnel visually inspected the HTDF and Wetland EE near the work area for evidence of bentonite migration. No visible evidence of a release to the HTDF or to Wetland EE was noted at this time. Field construction quality assurance (CQA) testing was also completed to verify that the physical parameters and composition of the bentonite slurry in

Mr. Joe Maki November 1, 2012 Page 2

the trench were appropriate. Upon completion of the tests, three 3,000 pound bags of dry bentonite were added directly to the slurry trench and mixed with the in-trench slurry to further increase the viscosity of the slurry mix and thereby improve its ability to plug subsurface voids. The slurry elevation in the trench was then re-established and site personnel continued to visually monitor the HTDF and Wetland EE for evidence of slurry migration during construction. At approximately 2:00 p.m., bentonite was observed to be venting into Wetland EE at three separate locations at the edge of the water.

Further response activities implemented on October 22, 2012, to address the venting of bentonite to Wetland EE included the addition of 6,000 pounds of additional dry bentonite to the slurry trench to further increase slurry viscosity, increase the sealing capabilities of the slurry and thereby limit the potential for migration of slurry from the trench. In addition, approximately 100 linear feet (LF) of silt fencing was constructed at the locations where venting was observed. The silt fencing was augmented with plastic sheeting to form a low permeability barrier to water/bentonite flow. Silt fencing was constructed in consultation with John Gustafson and Ginny Pennala of the MDEQ, Land and Water Management Division (LWMD), Upper Peninsula District Office.

Additional silt fencing and turbidity curtain were proposed to be constructed in Wetland EE as sedimentation control measures to mitigate migration of bentonite within the wetland. On October 26, 2012, approximately 450 LF of additional silt fencing was placed along the shore of the wetland in the area of and beyond where venting bentonite was observed. In addition, portable pumps have been set up to pump venting bentonite from the wetland to adjacent upland areas and periodic visual inspections of the HTDF and wetland are being performed. A turbidity curtain will be placed as an additional control measure beyond the limits of the existing silt fencing. These measures have been communicated to the MDEQ and are described in a Joint Permit Application (JPA) which was submitted to the MDEQ, LWMD on October 29, 2012. This JPA seeks a permit for construction of temporary sedimentation control measures in the wetland, which is regulated under Part 303 of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA). A copy of this application is presented as Attachment II to this letter. The sedimentation control measures described in the permit will be implemented as necessary in consultation with representatives of the MDEQ, LWMD.

ADDITIONAL REPORTING

As noted above, in accordance with General Condition F.7 of the Nonferrous Metallic Mineral Mining Permit, the incident described here was verbally reported to Joe Maki of the MDEQ, Upper Peninsula District Office during an October 22, 2012, telephone conversation with Kristen Mariuzza of KEMC. The MDEQ staff visited the site on October 23, 2012, inspecting the area of the release and providing guidance regarding control measures.

In addition, because response activities associated with this incident are not yet complete, in accordance with the requirements of General Condition F.8, a written final incident report will be submitted to your office within 30 days after the incident response is completed (i.e., sedimentation controls are removed from Wetland EE).

Should you have questions or concerns regarding anything presented here, please contact me at 906.486.1257, ext. 229.

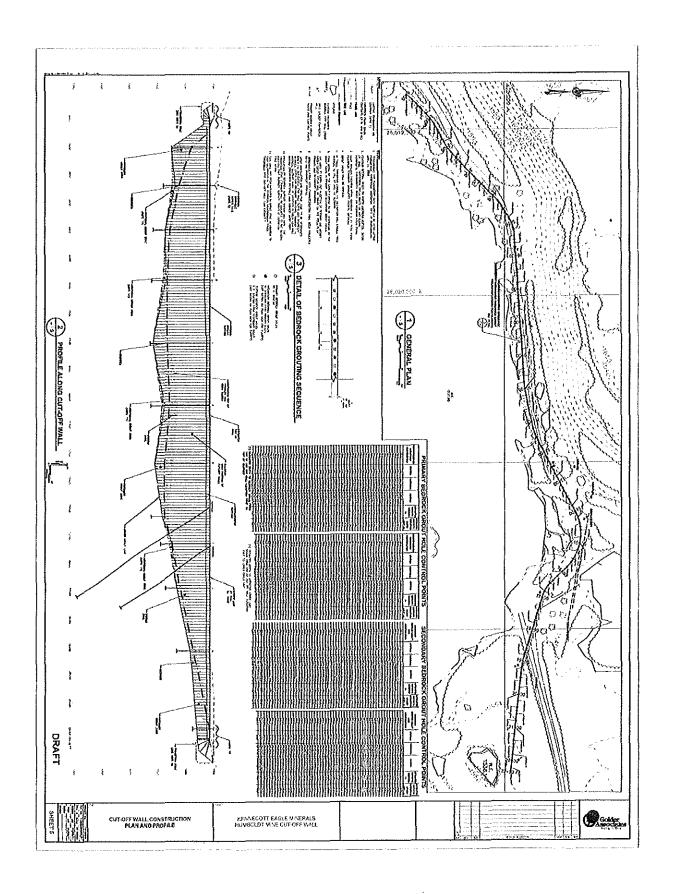
Kristen Mariuzza, P.R.

Environmental & Permitting Manager

Attachments

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SLURRY WALL PLAN SHEET #5



OCTOBER 29, 2012, JOINT PERMIT APPLICATION FOR CONSTRUCTION OF SEDIMENTATION CONTROLS IN WETLAND EE



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers www.ire.usace.army.mil Michigan Department of Environmental Quality www.mi.gov/lointpermit)



NCY SE	Previous USACE File Number	× e		DEQ File Number			
USACE File Number		Date Received		Fee received \$			
⊠ Ali ii ⊠ Proj ⊠ Dim ⊠ Ali ii ⊠ Map	a that all parts of this checklist are submitted in Sections 1 through 9 are completed act-specific Sections 10 through 20 are unations, volumes, and calculations are participated in the headings for , site plan(s), cross sections; one set mulication fee is attached.	led. completed. provided for all im the appropriate t	ipact areas. Sections (1-20) are addressed, an	d identified attachments (*) are included.			
M P	roject Location Information For La	litude, Longitude,	, and TRS info anywhere in Michig	pan see <u>www.mccz state.mi.us/welfaikis/</u>			
	Address (road, if no street address) ounty Road 601	Zip Cade 49814	Municipality (Township/Village/City) Humboldt Township	County Marquette			
52-06-2	y Tax Identification Number(s) 11-001-10	Latitude	<u>16. 4940</u> N	Township/Range/Section (TRS) T 47N N or S; R 29W E or W;			
Subdivi N/A	sion/Plat and Lot Number	Longitude - <u>g</u>	7 895 <u>4</u> W	Sec_2 OR Private Claim #			
2 A	pplicant and Agent Information						
	Applicant (Individual or corporate name)		Agent/Contractor (firm name	Agent/Contractor (firm name and contact person)			
	to Eagle Mine, LLC		N/A				
Mailing	Address 4547 County Road 601		Mailing Address N/A				
City Ch	amplon State MI Zi	Code 49814	City N/A	State N/A Zip Code N/A			
Contact (906) 48	Phone Number Fax 8-1257 (906) 486-	1053	Contact Phone Number	Fax N/A			
Email /	cristen.marluzza@riotinto.com		E-mail N/A				
this proj	ect? 🖈 if no, attach letter(s) of authoriza	tion from all prop	erty owners including the owner o	cted and all property involved or impacted by if the disposal site.			
Property	Owner's Name (If different from applic	ant) N/A	Mailing Address N/A				
Contact Phone Number N/A			City N/A	State N/A Zip Code N/A			
B P	oject Description						
Project (Name Wetland Sedimentation Control	Measures	Preapplication File Number	P			
Name o	Waler body Welland EE		Date project staked/flagged October 23, 2012				
The proposed project is on, within, or involves (check all that apply) an inland lake (6 acres or more) a great Lake or Section 10 Waters a pond (less than 5 acres) a wetland a stream, river, ditch or drain a legally established County Drain Date Drain was established a channel/carial a channel/carial a channel/carial a designated critical dune area 500 feet of an existing water body Indicate the type of permit being applied for: General Permit Minor Project Project Use Commercial public/government public/government public/government project is receiving federal/ transportation funds Wetland Restoration other							
Indicate	the type of permit being applied for:	General Permit	Minor Project ☐ Individual	(All other projects.) ⇒ See Appendix C.			
Wetland submer: wetland geologic	Vending of bentonite slurry has been formations in the construction area.	ite to welland. Viologopalities of the construct a second thou	Neter containing bentonito will to oil-bentonite slurry wall on upla- igh en underground channel or	be pumped from Wetland EE using a nd properly immediately adjacent to the other openings present in shallow			
using he		o observed ben	tonite venting in and near Wetla	rill be constructed on an "as needed" basis and EE. Water containing bentonite slurry and area			

Joint Permit Application



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers <u>www.lre.usace.army.mit</u> Michigan Department of Environmental Quality <u>www.mi.gov/jointpermit</u>



Project Purpo	se, Use and Alterna	Lives Attach a	dditional sheets	s as nec	essary.			
Describe the purpose of the project and its intended use; include any new development or expansion of an existing land use. Construction of a soil bentonite starry wall is being completed as part of the applicant's redevelopment of the Humboldt Mill site, in accordance with the requirements of a Nonferrous Metallic Mining permit issued under Part 632 of the NREPA. Sedimentation control measures are proposed to be placed in Wetland EE to limit bentonite sturry migration into the wetland. Water containing bentonite sturry is proposed to be pumped from wetland to adjacent upland area without reduction of the water elevation in the wetland.								
Describe the alternatives considered to avoid or minimize resource impacts. Include factors such as, but to limited to, alternative locations, project layout and design, and construction technologies. For utility crossings include alternative routes and construction methods. Soil erosion and sedimentation controls have been implemented at upland locations. The duration of slurry trench construction will be minimized to the extent practicable. The bentonite slurry in the slurry trench will be thickened by increasing the bentonite concentration, thereby increasing slurry viscocity and reducing the potential for venting.								
5 Locating You	r Project Site Attach	a legible black	and white map	with a	Vorth arrow.			
Names of roads of clo	sest intersection US-41	and Wolf Lake F	Road/County Ro	ad Fx				
approximately 300° c		on US-41, turn so	outh on paved o	lrive at a	rest visible landmark and water rey building, then immediate ction area.			
	s on the site (color; 1 or				cent landmarks or buildings (ad	ddress; color; etc)		
Grey 2 story at US-4	f turn off, no other stru	ctures	Grey 2 st	ory bull	iling on S side of US-41			
					ctivity angoing. Rip Tinto Ea n location of construction are			
6 Easements ar	id Other Permits							
⊠ No ☐ Yes Is the	re a conservation easem	ent or other ease	ment, deed restr	iction, lea	se, or other encumbrance upo	n the property?		
⇒ If yes, attach a cop	y. Provide copies of cou	irt orders and legi	al lake levels if a	pplicable.				
List all other federal, in	iterstate, state, or local a	gency authorizati	ions including red	ulred as	surances for Critical Dune Area	projects.		
Agency	Type of Approval	Number	Date Ap		Date approved /denied	Reason for denial		
MDEQ	Nonferrous Metallic Mining Permit	MP 01 2010	December 1		February 9, 2010	N/A		
Marquette County Conservation District	SESC Permit	092-09	December 20	December 2008 August 25, 2009		N/A		
7 Compliance				****,,,,,,				
If a permit is issued, w	hen will the activity begin	? (M/D/Y) 10/23	/12	Propos	ed completion date (M/D/Y) 12	/31/12		
 No ⊠ Yes Has any construction activity commenced or been completed in a regulated area? If Yes, identify the portion(s) underway or completed on drawings or attach project specifications and give completion dete(s). No ☐ Yes Were the regulated activities conducted under a DEQ and/or USACE permit? If Yes, list the permit numbers No ☐ Yes Are you aware of any unresolved violations of environmental law or litigation involving the property? If Yes, attach explanation. Adjacent Property Owners Provide current mailing addresses. Attach additional sheets/labels for long lists. 								
······································				s. Attacn				
☐ Established Lake B ☐ Lake Association	Lake Association							
List all adjacents. If you own the adjacent lot, provide the requested information for the first adjacent parcel that is not owned by you.								
Property Owner's Nam	Mailing Add	iress		City	State and Zip Code			
See Attachment I								
Applicant's Ce	rtification	 Read care	efully before sig	ning.				



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers www.lre.usace.army.mit Michigan Department of Environmental Quality www.mi.gov/lo/impermit DCQ



application; that it is true and accurate Program. I understand that there revoked if information on this application, I agree to order to inspect the proposed activation of the recessary local, county, and release me from the requirement of the application fee does not gue	rate; and, to the best of mare penalties for submittin ication is unirue. I certify allow representatives of the vity site before and during state, or federal permits ar ants of obtaining the perm	That I have the authority to underlake the he DEQ, USACE, and/or their agents or construction and after the completion of nd that the granting of other permits by lo it requested herein before commencing t	ith the information contained in this in the State Coastal Zone Management study pursuant to this application may be activities proposed in this application. By contractors to enter upon said property in the project. I understand that I must obtain scal, county, state, or federal agencies does the activity. I understand that the payment
⊠ Property Owner □ Agent/Contractor □ Corp. or Public Agency / Title	Printed Name Kristen Mariuzza	Signature	Date October 26, 2012



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers <u>www.fre.usace.army.mil</u> Michigan Department of Environmental Quality <u>www.mi.gov/jointpermit</u>



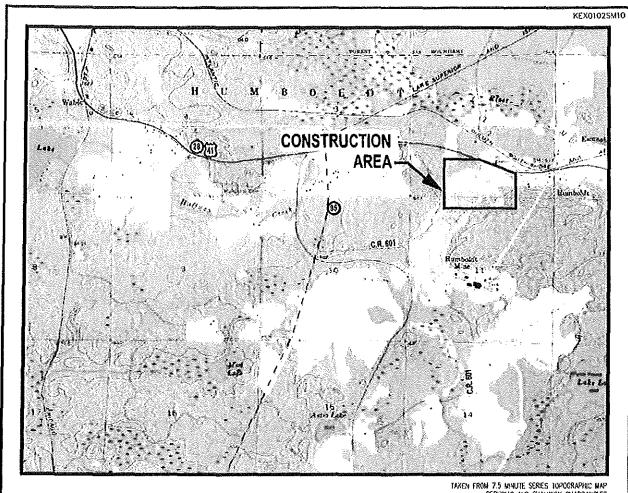
Provide a si	end NAVIGATION BUOYS (See E te plan showing the distances between as section drawing(s) showing ench	reen each buoy and f	from the shore to each b	uoy, and depth (ft) of	water at each location.
Purpose of buoy	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			swimming [other
Number of buoys	Dimensions of buoys (ft) width height s	swing radius	chain length	Boat Lengths	Type of anchor system
Buoy Location: I		ngilude		ble for multiple buoys.	•
	property along the shoreline?	□ No □ Yes			The second secon
Do you own the t	pottomlands?	□ No □ Yes	⇒ If No, attach an suti	honzation letter from	the property owner(s).
	overall site plan showing the propo traving of fence profile showing the				I to bottom of fence
Purpose of fence	☐ Airport ☐ Cervida	ae 🗌 Livesto	ock 🗌 Resident	tial Security	⊠ Other Silt Fence
Total length (ft) o	•		Fence height (ft)	Fence type and r	material
	lands 650 feet floodplains		3	Wood slat and g	
devices, soil bon	e.g., structure removal, maintenani ngs, or survey activities.	ce or repair, aerator,	dry fire hydrant, gold pro	ispecting, habitet stru	iclures, scientific measuring
bodies. Which best descr ☐ mining ☐ rec	vations, cross-sections and profiles	e (check all that epply	у)	***************************************	pillways to nearest water
Water source for groundwater	:	.ake or Stream 🗀 s	storm water runoff 🔲 g	pump [] sewage [other
Location of the lai	ke/basin/pond [] floodplain	wetland] stream (Inline) ☐ ι	upland	
Maximum dimens length	sions (ft) width dapth	Maximum A	Area: 🗌 acres 🔲 sq	ft	- Philippine and the State of t
Has the there been a hydrologic study performed on the site? □ No □ Yes ⇒ If Yes, provide a copy.					сору.
Has the DEQ con	ducted a wetland assessment for ti	his parcel?	□ No □ Yes	⇒ If Yes, provide a copy or WIP number:	
Has a professiona	al wetland delineation been conduc	ited for this parcel?	□ No □ Yes	⇒ If Yes, provide a expression in the	copy with data sheets.
'8 D	ed or excavated spoils will be plac sposal, provide a ⇒Detalled spoils ⇒Letter of autho	disposal area locatio		h property lines.	



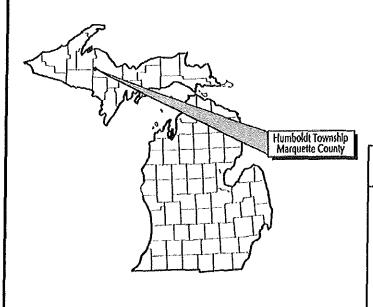
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers <u>www.ire.usace.army.mil</u> Michigan Department of Environmental Quality <u>www.mi.gov/jointpermit</u>

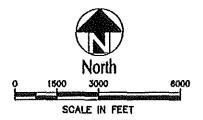


Loca For is Pr PC PA	ate your si nformatior rovide a d omplete th ttach table	hat May Impact Wetlands (See Sample to and wetland information with the DEQ Wetland Identification Progressialled site plan with labeled property lines, see wetland dredge and wetland fill dimensions for multiple Impact areas or activities.	ellands Map Vie am (WIP) visit w upland and wet n information be	wer at <u>www.mcgi.st</u> www.ml.gov/weitends and areas, and dim low for each impact	ate mi us/wetlends/ i. ensions and volumes of we ed wetlend area. d upland boundaries on the	o cross-section			
Has the	Has the DEQ conducted a wetland assessment for this parcel? ☑ No ☐ Yes if Yes, provide a copy or WP number.								
Hasap	Has a professional wetland delineation been conducted for this parcel? ☐ No ☒ Yes ♣ If Yes, provide a copy with data sheets								
is there	Is there a recorded DEQ easement on the property? ☑ No ☐ Yes if Yes, provide the easement number								
Dkl the	applicant	purchase the property before October 1, 19	80?	⊠ No □ Yes					
ls any g	rading or	mechanized land clearing proposed?		⊠ No □ Yes	⇒ If Yes, label the location	ons on the site plan.			
Has any complet		oposed grading or mechanized land clearin	g been	⊠ No ☐ Yes	If Yes, label the location	ons on the site plan			
	ed Activity	☐ boardwalk or deck (Section 10I) ☑ dewatering ☐ fences (Section 10L) ☐ septic system	(Section 14) ☐ draining su ☐ fill or dredg	ges and culverts					
FILL Dimensions maximum length (ft) N/A maximum width (ft) N/A		maximum length (ft) N/A	Area acres acres sq ft		Average depth (ft)	Volume (cu yd)			
Dimensions maximum length (ft) N/A maximum width (ft) N/A		maximum length (ft) N/A	Area ☐ acres ☐ sq ft		Average depth (ft)	Valume (cu yd)			
Spotts Disposal	_	or excavated spoils will be placed ☐ on- osal, provide a ⇒ Detalled spoils disposa ⇒ Letter of authorization	l area location n	nap and site plan wit	-	·			
Constru	Describe the wetland impacts, the proposed use or development, and the alternatives considered: Construction of slit tence and turbidity curtain as a sedimentation control measure to mitigate venting of bantonite to welland. Other,								
pentoni	to sturry	allon control measures (e.g., hay bules) Into the wetland was considered and rej Ible pump discharging to nearby upland	ected. Limited	extraction of water	r material in the welland will als	to provent now or			
₱ If Yes Describe	, submit a how imp	mpact more than 1/3 acre of wetland? Mitigation Plan with the type and amount of acts to waters of the United States will be a silt fencing will mitigate migration of ben	of miligation prop	mized:					
Describe how the impact to waters of the United States will be compensated. OR Explain why compensatory mitigation should not be required for the proposed impacts. No compensation is required because wetlands will be protected through installation of silt fencing.									



TAKEN FROM 7.5 INNUTE SERES 10POGRAPHIC MAP REPUBLIC AND CHAMPION OUARRANGES SCALE: 1' = 3000'

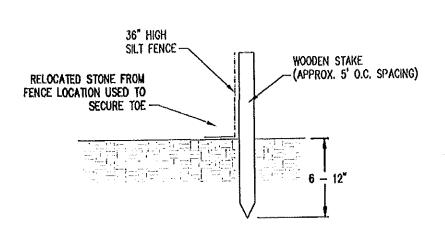




WETLAND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL CONSTRUCTION

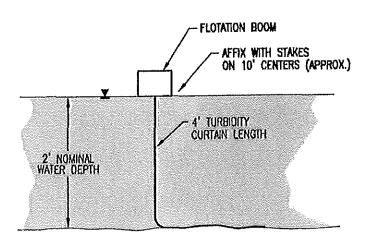
RIO TINTO EAGLE MINE, LLC WETLAND "EE" HUMBOLDT TOWNSHIP MARQUETTE COUNTY SHEET 1 OF 3 OCTOBER 2012





SILT FENCE DETAIL

NO SCALE



TURBIDITY CURTAIN DETAIL

NO SCALE

WETLAND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL CONSTRUCTION

KEX0102F98

RIO TINTO EAGLE MINE, LLC WETLAND "EE" HUMBOLDT TOWNSHIP MARQUETTE COUNTY SHEET 3 OF 3 OCTOBER 2012

ATTACHMENT I

RIO TINTO EAGLE MINE, LLC HUMBOLDT TOWNSHIP, MARQUETTE COUNTY, MICHIGAN ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS

- Jeff P. & Joyce Ogea, 3891 CR FA, Champion, MI 49814
- Thomas & James Kumpu, 4612 Daniel Dr., Crystal Lake, IL 60014
- Holli Forest Products (Dave Holli), Cooper Lake Road, Ishpeming, MI 49849
- Christopher & Holly Ray, 2299 CR 601, Champion, MI 49814
- Humboldt Properties, LLC (Peter O'Dovero), 110 Airport Rd., Negaunee, MI 49866
- A. Lindberg & Sons Inc. (Roger Crimmins), 599 Washington Street, Ishpeming, MI 49849
- Humboldt Stone (Roger Crimmins), 560 Mather Ave., Ishpeming, MI 49849
- Edward & Sandra Ogea, 5637 US 41 West, Champion, MI 49814

ATTACHMENT II

RIO TINTO EAGLE MINE, LLC HUMBOLDT TOWNSHIP, MARQUETTE COUNTY, MICHIGAN WETLAND DELINEATION



King & MacGregor Environmental, Inc. 2520 Woodmeadow Drive SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546 Phone (616)957-1231 • Fax (616) 957-2198

Memo

Date: October 15, 2008

To: Stephen Donohue, Foth Infrastructure & Environment, LLC

Cc: Dennis Donohue, Warner, Norcross & Judd, LLP

Vicky Peacey, Foth Infrastructure & Environment, LLC

From: Matthew MacGregor

Re: Humboldt Mill Site - WWTP Discharge Wetlands

King & MacGregor Environmental, Inc. (KME) was contracted by Foth Infrastructure & Environment, LLC (Foth I&E) to conduct baseline biological investigations within the Humboldt Mill Site in Marquette County, Michigan. On September 18 and 22, 2008, as part of these Investigations, KME conducted a wetland delineation within the area directly north of the Humboldt Tailings Disposal Facility (HTDF) and south of the previously delineated Wetland EE (Figure 1). The intent of this report is to provide a description of the character of the wetlands identified and an opinion regarding the possible jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) over these wetlands.

Methods

The methods used to conduct this wetland delineation were consistent with the procedures and general practices used by the MDEQ (Michigan Department of Environmental Quality) as described in A Technical Manual for Identifying Wetlands in Michigan (MDEQ, 2001).

The wetland delineation was conducted on September 18 and 22, 2008. Each area of potential wetland was evaluated to determine if wetland vegetation, visual evidence of wetland hydrology and hydric soils were present. Based on this evaluation, an upland/wetland boundary was identified for each wetland. The wetland boundaries were delineated by placing numbered pink flagging at intervals along the identified boundaries. Each numbered flag was located by survey. Photographs were taken of each wetland (Photos 1 through 14).

Results

Eight wetlands were identified within the area of investigation. The wetlands were identified as wetlands 1 through 8 and are described below:

Wetland 1

This small emergent wetland is located in the eastern portion of the area of investigation, northeast of the HTDF. This wetland appears to have developed within a previously graded



Kennecott Eagle Minerals Company Humboldt Mill Site – WWTP Discharge Wetlands

October 15, 2008 Page 1 of 5 area. Plant species identified within this wetland included broad-leaved cattall (*Typha latifolia*), sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*), interrupted fern (*Osmunda claytoniana*) and red-top grass (*Agrostis stolonifera*). Standing water was present within this wetland at the time of inspection. The soil column in this wetland was disturbed, consisting mainly of large broken rock and cobble. This wetland was identified using flags labeled 1-1 through 1-4.

Wetland 2

This emergent and open water wetland is located in the eastern portion of the area of investigation, northeast of Wetland 1. This wetland appears to have developed within a previously disturbed area, consisting mainly of an open water area within a bedrock or rock rubble depression. Plant species identified within this wetland included broad-leaved cattail, interrupted fern, wool grass (*Scirpus cyperinus*) and red-top grass. The soil column in this wetland was disturbed, consisting mainly of large broken rock, cobbte and bedrock. This wetland was identified using flags labeled 2-1 through 2-6.

Welland 3

This scrub/shrub wetland is located in the eastern portion of the area of investigation, south of Wetland 2, at the base of a steep exposed rock hillside. Plant species identified within this wetland included speckled alder (Alnus incana), swamp aster (Aster puniceus), wild strawberry (Fragaria virginiana), woodland horsetail (Equisetum sylvaticum), sensitive fern, and red-top grass. The soil column in this wetland was disturbed, consisting mainly of large broken rock and cobble. This wetland was identified using flags labeled 3-1 through 3-8.

Wetland 4

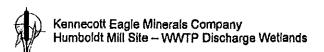
This emergent and open water wetland is located in the eastern portion of the area of investigation, along the northeast edge of the HTDF. Plant species identified within this wetland included speckled alder, broad-leaved cattall, wool grass and various sedge species (*Carex sp.*). The soil column in this wetland was disturbed, consisting mainly of saturated sands and large broken rock and cobble. This wetland was identified using flags labeled 4-1 through 4-4. It should be noted that a narrow (1-2 feet) band of wetland vegetation was observed intermittently along most of the HTDF shoreline. Due to its linear configuration and close proximity to the shore, it was not flagged.

Wetland 5

This scrub/shrub wetland is located on the western portion of the area of investigation, on the north side of the HTDF. Plant species identified within this wetland included speckled alder, balsam poplar (*Populus balsamifera*), quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), blue-joint grass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*), varicolored iris (*Iris versicolor*), swamp aster, strict sedge (*Carex stricta*), stipitate sedge (*Carex stipata*), woodland horsetail, sensitive fern, and red-top grass. The soil column in this wetland was disturbed, consisting mainly of saturated sand, broken rock and cobble. This wetland was identified using flags labeled 5-1 through 5-21.

Wetland 6

This scrub/shrub wetland is located in the western portion of the area of investigation, northwest of Wetland 5, at the base of a steep exposed rock hillside. Plant species identified within this wetland included speckled alder, blue-joint grass, garden tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) and sensitive fern. The soil column in this wetland was disturbed, consisting mainly of large broken rock and cobble. This wetland was identified using flags labeled 6-1 through 6-6.



Wetland 7

This scrub/shrub wetland is located in the western portion of the area of investigation, southwest of Wetland 6, at the base of a steep exposed rock hillside. Plant species identified within this wetland included speckled alder, blue-joint grass, garden tansy and sensitive fern. The soil column in this wetland was disturbed, consisting mainly of large broken rock and cobble. This wetland was identified using flags labeled 7-1 through 7-6.

Wetland 8

This scrub/shrub wetland is located in the western portion of the area of investigation, east of Wetland 7, at the base of a steep exposed rock hillside. Plant species identified within this wetland included speckled alder, blue-joint grass, garden tansy and sensitive fern. The soil column in this wetland was disturbed, consisting mainly of large broken rock and cobble. This wetland was identified using flags labeled 8-1 through 8-6.

Discussion

In order for the MDEQ to have regulatory authority over a wetland, the wetland must be contiguous to a lake, pond, and/or stream and/or over 5 acres in size. Due to their proximity to the HTDF, all of the wetlands identified in this investigation are likely regulated under the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, P.A. 451 of 1994,(NREPA) Part 303, Wetland Protection.

The NREPA, Part 301 defines an "Inland lake or stream" as "...a natural or artificial lake, pond, or impoundment; a river, stream, or creek...or any other body of water that has definite banks, a bed, and visible evidence of a continued flow or continued occurrence of water...". Further, "Ordinary high-water mark" is defined as "... the line between upland and bottomland that persists through successive changes in water levels, below which the presence and action of the water is so common or recurrent that the character of the land is marked distinctly from the upland and is apparent in the soil itself, the configuration of the surface of the soil, and the vegetation...".

Based on evaluation of the shoreline of the HTDF, it appears that the Ordinary High Water Mark of this waterbody is located at Wetland Flag 4-1, or between elevation 1538.52 and 1538.78.

REFERENCES AND LITERATURE CITED

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. 2001. MDEQ Wetland Identification Manual: A Technical Manual for Identifying Wetlands in Michigan. EQ2787.

United States Department of Agriculture. 2005. Soil Survey Geographic Database for Marquette County, Michigan. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service. http://www.SoilDataMart.ncrcs.usda.gov

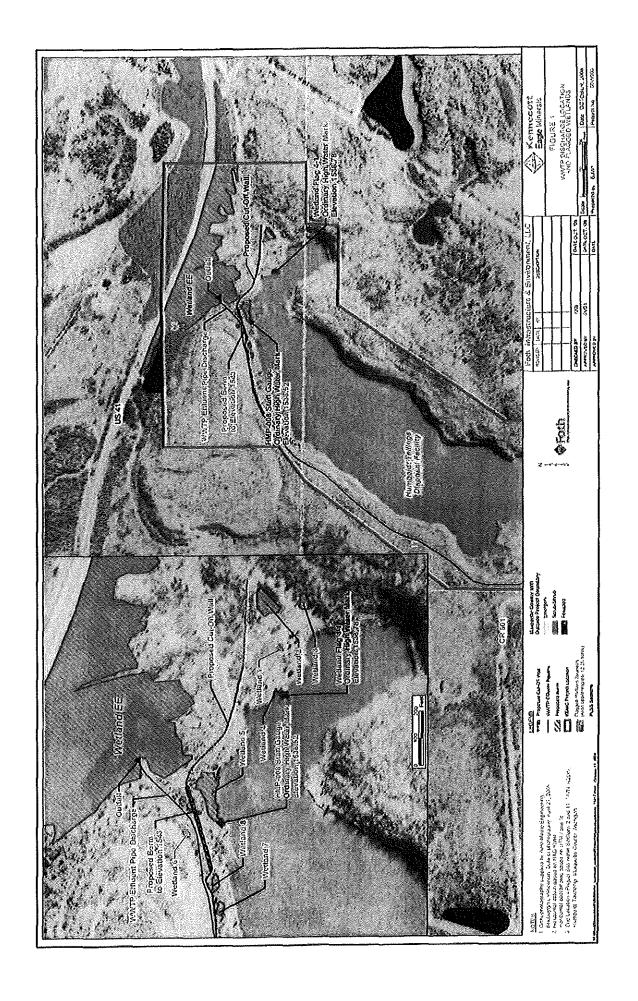




Photo 1: Wetland 1a

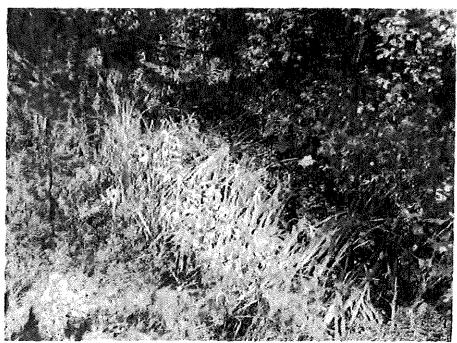


Photo 2: Wetland 1b





Photo 3: Wetland 2a



Photo 4: Wetland 2b



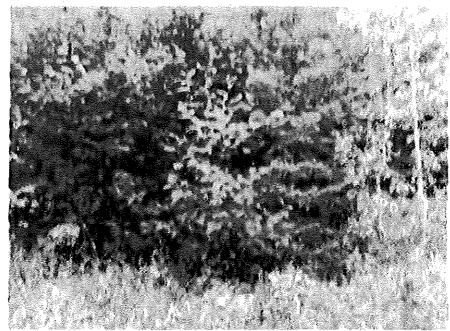


Photo 5: Wetland 3a



Photo 6: Wetland 3b



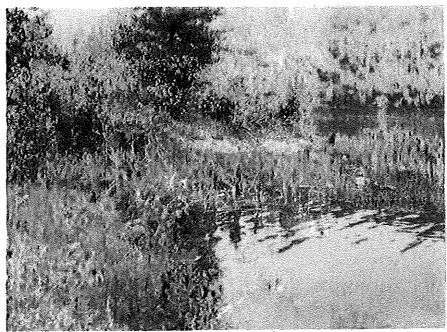


Photo 7: Wetland 4a

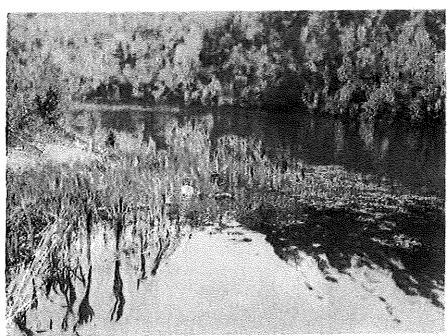


Photo 8: Wetland 4b





Photo 9: Wetland 4c



Photo 10: Wetland 5a



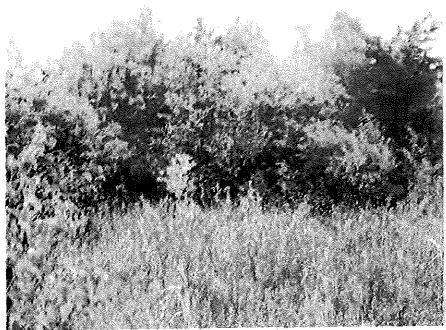


Photo 11: Wetland 5b



Photo 12: Wetland 6

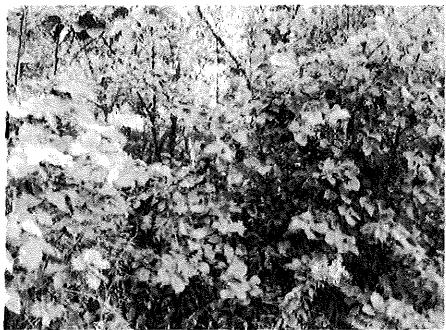


Photo 13: Wetland 7

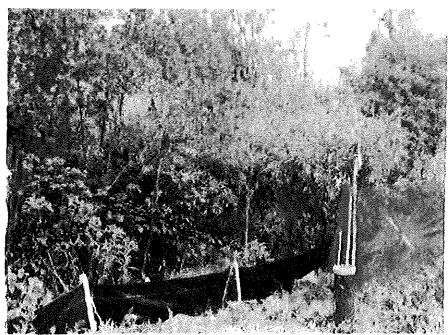


Photo 14: Wetland 8

